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LETTER DATED 7 SEPTEMBER 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit the text of an appeal by the Head of State and President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, to his fellow-countrymen who by force of circumstance are abroad, to adherents of various ideological and political persuasions, and to members of unauthorized armed formations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this appeal circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) L. KAYUMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Appeal to fellow-countrymen who by force of circumstance are abroad, to adherents of various ideological and political persuasions, and to members of unauthorized armed formations

Our fatherland, which longs for peace and tranquillity, is living in anticipation of change. It has yearned for its sons and daughters who are far from its expanses, the strong arms, good intentions and brilliant minds which are so greatly needed to heal the wounds on its dissension-racked body.

We stand on the threshold of a historic process of political reform that will determine the future of our nation and its statehood. The Constitution and national election of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, as acts linked to the will of each individual, must demonstrate to the entire world that one of the world's oldest nations - the Tajik nation - has not lost the ability to achieve unity at a decisive moment in its history and make a deliberate choice in the name of self-preservation.

The emergence of a sovereign and independent Tajikistan, which began in an atmosphere of nationwide appreciation of the significance of this process, has, as fate would have it, reached an unnatural turning-point in a relatively short time. The Tajik land, so afflicted by confrontation and the flames of civil war, has suffered irreparable losses. A sad exodus from Tajikistan has begun and has at times assumed a threatening nature. One can only regret that in one of the most peace-loving countries politics has occasionally been determined by weapons.

It is not for us or for anyone else to seek out the guilty parties. This has been the entire nation's misfortune, which we have been able, with great effort, to overcome. And yet we should all be ashamed of what happened: that mothers shed bitter tears as we set out to become an independent State; that our consanguineous brothers and sisters and their children became refugees; that the graves of Tajiks lie forgotten in foreign lands. We should be ashamed that Tajiks, who are genetically imbued with a love for their fellow man and a spirit of patience, find themselves in need of a mediator to make peace amongst them.

We are grateful to all our friends who have furthered the noble cause of bringing civil harmony to Tajikistan. We are convinced that their efforts to this end will increase. But one thing should be clear to us all: the return of peace to Tajikistan depends first and foremost on us. For we are fighting (and how painful - indeed, bitter - it is to admit this) amongst ourselves and not against someone else.

I am convinced that the time has come for us to stop. We can no longer remain in a state of confrontation. We must understand that the dream Tajiks have cherished for millennia - the attainment of statehood - today faces a genuine threat.

History has afforded us the opportunity, through the tested mechanisms of democracy - the referendum on a new Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan and free presidential elections - for the entire nation to determine its own future. We must not permit certain forces to use this opportunity for purposes inconsistent with our national interests. It is our view that providing each of our citizens with the conditions for the free expression of his or her will must become the foundation of social stability.

Bearing in mind the highest interests of the State, the twentieth session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan has adopted a resolution postponing the holding of the referendum and elections so that all citizens, political parties and public associations might have an equal opportunity to exercise their constitutional rights.

In this connection, and while expressing full support for the Supreme Council resolution, I call upon you, my fellow-countrymen abroad, adherents of various ideological and political persuasions, and members of unauthorized armed formations, to take part actively in the political reform process under way in our common homeland.

I appeal to you - Russians, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Germans and representatives of other nationalities - whom circumstance has forced to abandon your country and seek refuge elsewhere, to return home to work with your Tajik brothers to make Tajikistan a hospitable, comfortable and flourishing home for us and for our children. This is both our and your homeland.

I appeal to each and every one of my fellow-countrymen abroad to return to the fatherland. On behalf of the Supreme Council and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, I guarantee your personal safety, including that of the leaders of opposition movements.

You may organize public associations and political parties within the framework of the legislation in force and nominate candidates for the office of President. Provided that the prescribed legal procedures are followed, such candidates will be registered unconditionally.

These guarantees and rights, naturally, may be fully exercised on condition that acts which undermine mutual trust, including incidents outside the country, are halted.

In addressing all of you who are outside our borders, particularly those who would settle our complex problems by violent means, I express the hope that my appeal will find understanding in the hearts of each of you.

We must remember that failure to take advantage of this historic opportunity to set the country on the road to civilized development will be equivalent to a nationwide catastrophe for which our descendants will never forgive us.

We are committed to settling all our problems through peaceful means, using the mechanism of inter-Tajik dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations as well as the good will of all our people to this end. In this connection, I once again confirm our readiness to continue peace talks with the opposition at the highest level.

Let us be guided by common sense. The people must be the winners in the forthcoming elections. And may the Most High set us on the road of truth.

(Signed) Emomali RAKHMONOV
Head of State
President of the Supreme Council
of the Republic of Tajikistan